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Report of the Secretary-General on South Sudan (covering the period from 2 March to 1 June 2017)

I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to Security Council resolution 2327 (2016), by which the Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) until 15 December 2017 and requested me to report on the implementation of the mandate every 90 days. It covers political and security developments from 2 March to 1 June 2017, as well as reforms undertaken to adapt UNMISS to the situation on the ground, increase efficiency in the implementation of its mandate and enhance the safety and security of United Nations staff. It also provides a review of progress made by the parties in ceasing hostilities, returning to the path of dialogue and achieving inclusiveness within the Government and addresses the issue of adjustments to the UNMISS mandate.

II. Political and economic developments

South Sudan peace process

2. The implementation of the Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan (the peace agreement) remains largely stalled, with no significant progress towards ensuring greater inclusivity in the Transitional Government of National Unity. On 15 March, President Salva Kiir announced the appointment of new ministers for the portfolios of Labour, Public Service, Human Resources Development and Agriculture and Food Security. The posts, which had become vacant following the resignation of opposition officials, were allocated to the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army (SPLM/A) in Opposition under First Vice-President Taban Deng Gai and allied political parties. President Kiir also appointed new Deputy Ministers of Defence and Veteran Affairs (from the pro-Taban Deng Gai SPLM/A in Opposition) and of Labour, Public Service and Human Resources Development (from SPLM in Government). Also on 15 March, the President replaced 21 members of the Transitional National Legislative Assembly linked to former First Vice-President Riek Machar with those allied to First Vice-President Taban Deng Gai.

3. In accordance with chapter VII of the peace agreement, the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission convened monthly plenary meetings on 15 March, 26 April and 24 May. At the March plenary, members of the Commission agreed to establish six technical working committees, based on the thematic chapters of the

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peace agreement, namely, governance, security, humanitarian assistance, economy and finance, transitional justice and constitutional affairs. The committees were tasked with assessing progress towards implementation of the peace agreement, recommending remedial actions and presenting status reports ahead of the plenary meetings of the Commission.

4. On 31 March, the Chair of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, former President Festus Mogae, met with Riek Machar in South Africa, urging him to denounce violence, declare a unilateral ceasefire and participate in the national dialogue. Arguing that his forces were acting in self-defence, Mr. Machar called for the convening of a neutral forum for the parties to discuss ceasefire issues and to revive the peace agreement.

5. On 13 April, the Chair of the National Constitutional Amendment Committee presented to the Minister of Justice and Constitutional Affairs a draft bill outlining amendments required to align the Transitional Constitution of 2011 with the peace agreement. In line with its mandate, the Committee started reviewing national security laws and other legislation to be amended, to ensure consistency with the peace agreement.

6. On 25 April, President Kiir expanded to 103 members the Steering Committee of the national dialogue initiative announced on 14 December 2016, maintaining a large majority of members from SPLM in Government, SPLM/A in Opposition allied to First Vice-President Taban Deng Gai and allied political parties. New appointees also include representatives of the group of former political detainees, prominent religious leaders and nine foreign nationals, but no representatives of Mr. Machar or other opposition movements residing outside the country. On 22 May, President Kiir officially launched the national dialogue process, in the presence of President Museveni of Uganda, and swore in 60 committee members present in Juba. He also announced a unilateral ceasefire to create a conducive environment for the dialogue and facilitate humanitarian assistance, ordered security organs to stop arresting opposition elements who wished to join the dialogue and ordered a review of political prisoners. On 31 May, President Kiir appointed three women to the leadership organ of the National Dialogue Steering Committee, now comprising nine members.

7. In joint statements dated 17 and 30 April, a new grouping of six prominent opposition entities condemned President Kiir's plans for the national dialogue as "unilateral" and not genuinely inclusive. The signatories to the statements included the pro-Machar SPLM/A in Opposition, the former political detainees, the National Democratic Movement led by Lam Akol and the National Salvation Front/Army recently formed by former Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Deputy Chief of General Staff for Logistics, General Thomas Cirillo Swaka. The pro-Machar SPLM/A in Opposition faction, in a statement released on 22 May, also condemned the process as a "one-sided dialogue being imposed by President Kiir and his allies".

Regional engagement

8. During a visit to South Sudan from 1 to 7 March, the African Union High Representative for South Sudan, former President Alpha Oumar Konaré, engaged with Transitional Government officials, including President Kiir, in order to revive the political process, obtain a cessation of hostilities and create an environment conducive to inclusive dialogue. On 17 March, the African Union Peace and Security Council urged the parties to uphold the permanent ceasefire and stressed the imperative of an inclusive and transparent national dialogue process led by an impartial figure. On 26 and 27 March, the Chair of the African Union Commission,

Moussa Faki Mahamat, travelled to South Sudan to visit famine-affected areas in Unity State and to meet with national stakeholders and assess the situation. During those meetings, he expressed his deep concern at the humanitarian crisis in the country and called upon the warring parties to desist from violence.

9. In Nairobi, on 25 March, the Assembly of Heads of State and Government of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) discussed the situation in South Sudan. In its final communiqué, the Assembly announced that President Kiir had accepted to proclaim a unilateral ceasefire and grant general amnesty to those who renounced violence in order to promote inclusive participation in the national dialogue. In Kampala, on 25 and 26 May, President Museveni of Uganda convened a meeting between SPLM in Government, SPLM/A in Opposition Taban Deng Gai faction and the former political detainees.

Other political developments

10. On 9 May, President Kiir removed General Paul Malong Awan from his position as Chief of General Staff of SPLA, appointing Lieutenant General James Ajongo Mawut to this position. General Malong travelled to Yirol, in Eastern Lakes, where he stayed until his return to Juba on 13 May at the urging of Dinka elders and government officials. On 15 May, President Kiir announced several changes to the SPLA leadership structure and the creation of three service branches: the Ground Force, the Air Force and Air Defence, and the Riverine Unit.

Economic developments

11. South Sudan continues to face severe macroeconomic challenges. Prices further increased, albeit at a slower rate in the first four months of 2017 compared with the last four months of 2016, with annual inflation averaging 343.7 per cent and 495.4 per cent, respectively. Oil production, at approximately 130,000 barrels per day, remained at low levels compared with production before the outbreak of the conflict. The South Sudanese pound continued to slide against the United States dollar and persistent salary backlogs undermined household purchasing power across the country. The Government reiterated its commitment to economic and fiscal stabilization measures, which include non-oil revenue collection and expenditure reduction as well as strengthening monetary policy and the banking system, but the downturn shows no immediate signs of reversal.

III. Security situation

12. SPLA undertook offensives in Opposition-controlled areas in Upper Nile and Jonglei and continued its attempts to flush out opposition elements in Western Bahr el-Ghazal and Central and Eastern Equatoria. Civilians were often caught in the fighting, if not deliberately targeted, which led to massive displacement, human rights violations and growing humanitarian needs.

Greater Upper Nile region

13. The security situation in Greater Upper Nile continued to deteriorate. In Wau Shilluk, on 3 March, a patrol team from UNMISS and the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism observed that no civilians remained in town following a heavy SPLA offensive. SPLA consolidated its positions in Manyo County by conducting an aerial bombardment around Kedbek, outside Nasir, on 15 March and reportedly captured Thorgwang and Daba villages from the pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition. In Wau Shilluk, shelling was observed between SPLA and the pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition on 23 March. There were reports of

an SPLA attack on Tonga, in Panyikang County, and clashes between Opposition forces and SPLA near Owachi, on 13 April. Opposition troops withdrew from Tonga following heavy fighting with SPLA on 17 April. SPLA captured Kodok from SPLA in Opposition during fighting on 25 and 26 April, resulting in a large number of civilians fleeing from Kodok to Aburoc. On 4 May, SPLA deployed forces to Tonga following reports of clashes with Aguelek/pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition forces in that area. From 5 to 9 May, SPLA clashed with Aguelek/pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition forces in the Kaka area and reportedly took control of the area.

14. The security situation in Jonglei was unstable, with reports of SPLA forces advancing into Opposition-controlled areas in central and northern Jonglei. Following fighting in Uror County, in early March, civilians reportedly fled Motot and Pulchuol to Wa'at and Lankien, towards Akobo. On 19 March, an armed group attacked a commercial vessel on the Nile travelling from Tayer to Bor, killing eight civilians and injuring seven. SPLA reportedly clashed with the pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition in Wau Payam, Ayod County, on 31 March, near Yuai, Uror County on 12 April, in the Wa'at area on 15 and 16 April and in Shwil Nyerol County on 25 April. On 5 May, SPLA clashed with pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition forces when the latter reportedly attacked the residences of the Governors of Akobo and Bieh States (created by establishment order 02/2017). On 17 May, pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition forces tried to retake Wa'at, but were pushed back by SPLA.

15. In Unity, children and young people continued to be abducted, recruited and used by SPLA and the pro-Taban Deng Gai SPLA in Opposition in Guit and Leer Counties. On 26 March, UNMISS conducted a patrol to Mayendit, where pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition officials reported clashes with Government forces. On 15 April, UNMISS conducted a patrol to Wunkur on the border with Upper Nile, after previously being denied access by SPLA soldiers threatening to open fire on the patrol, and observed a large number of SPLA soldiers with four tanks and two armoured personnel carriers. On 3 May, the UNMISS temporary operating base in Leer came under small arms fire; UNMISS peacekeepers repelled the attack, and no injuries or damage were sustained. UNMISS is investigating the attack. On 10 May, clashes were reported between SPLA and the pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition in Luom Payam, Leer County.

Greater Equatoria region

16. The security situation was tense in the Equatorias, with reports of clashes between SPLA and opposition elements, insecurity along major roadways and allegations that SPLA soldiers were targeting civilians. In Central Equatoria, confrontations between Government forces and the pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition were reported in Yei town on 12 March, in Kajo Kaji on 26 March, in Ombaci, Yei County, on 8 April; in the Kagelu area, west of Yei town, from 16 to 20 May; and in the Kaia area on 25 May. The Mission also received reports that Government forces had attacked opposition locations in the Kajo Kaji area during the month of May. There were also reports of confrontations between members of Government security forces in Yei town, including the killing of an SPLA soldier and a National Security Service officer. Meanwhile, insecurity along the Juba-Bor road continued. On 10 March, a commercial vehicle was attacked by armed men, killing two foreign nationals. On 25 March, an armed group ambushed and killed seven individuals, six of them humanitarian workers, including four foreign nationals. In April, ambushes by uniformed men on the Juba-Pibor and Juba-Torit roads resulted in six fatalities, and on 5 May, multiple attacks on the Juba-Bor road resulted in 27 civilian deaths. On 9 May, a convoy of the escort guards of the First Vice-President was attacked by armed individuals between Gemmaiza and Mangala, resulting in two injuries.

17. In Eastern Equatoria, an SPLA convoy was ambushed in Lopa County on 7 March, reportedly by opposition elements and local youth, killing three SPLA soldiers. On 8 March, armed men in uniform robbed a commercial truck on the Lopa-Lafon road. On 18 March, armed men in uniform ambushed a convoy of trucks contracted by a United Nations agency to transport food to Ikotos County. In Pajok, from 3 to 5 April, violence erupted when armed individuals attacked an SPLA military convoy, following which SPLA elements attacked civilians in Pajok Payam, apparently on the basis of suspected support for SPLM/A in Opposition, causing civilian displacement to Uganda and the surrounding area. UNMISS patrols to Pajok observed the town to be highly militarized.

18. In Western Equatoria, insecurity involving Government forces and armed opposition elements persisted. In March, suspected members of the South Sudan People's Patriotic Front allegedly abducted civilians in different locations in Yambio County. There were also reports of SPLA operations against opposition elements in Nagero County, clashes between Government forces and armed men in the Ikpiro area of Yambio and a shooting incident between the South Sudan National Police Service and former members of the South Sudan People's Patriotic Front in Yambio town.

Greater Bahr el-Ghazal region

19. The security situation in Greater Bahr el-Ghazal was tense, with reports of clashes and security incidents involving Government forces and opposition elements. In Lakes, a medical mission was ambushed by armed men along the Shambe-Karair road, near the border with Unity, on 14 March. One state official of the Health Department was killed and two others, including an international staff member of a United Nations agency, were wounded. On 2 May, an international aid agency vehicle was ambushed by an armed group between Wulu and Lam, Wulu County, resulting in two injuries. In Warrap, one SPLA soldier was killed and two others injured, when an SPLA convoy was attacked by armed individuals in Apuk West County on 28 April.

20. After heavy shelling and shooting south-west of Wau town on 24 and 25 March, SPLA deployed reinforcements and reported that local opposition elements had attacked SPLA positions in Natabu and Bagari, injuring four SPLA soldiers. After an SPLA soldier was reportedly killed in Mapel by an armed group on 3 April, clashes continued in Mapel on 4 April, with witnesses reporting several dead bodies at an SPLA checkpoint. Fighting in nearby Majak on 5 April caused hundreds of civilians to seek refuge in Wau town. Following those incidents, SPLA deployed additional soldiers, artillery and tanks to its Grinti barracks, in Wau. On 10 April, shooting broke out in five locations in Wau town after suspected opposition forces had killed 19 SPLA soldiers in an ambush on the Bazia-Wau road the previous day. Government forces allegedly sought revenge on civilian residents in Wau town. More than 22,000 people were displaced, seeking refuge in the protection area adjacent to the UNMISS base in Wau and other sites in Wau town. Meanwhile, clashes continued outside Wau town. On 12 April, there were reports of mortar fire in the Bagari area, south-west of Wau. An UNMISS patrol to Bagari on 13 April was stopped by SPLA on the outskirts of Wau town. On 14 April, SPLA forces reportedly clashed with opposition elements in Raga town, resulting in civilian displacement. On 13 May, several SPLA soldiers were reportedly killed in clashes with the pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition between Biringi and Natabu, south-west of Wau town. On 14 May, SPLA allegedly attacked pro-Machar SPLA in Opposition positions in the Gede area.

Intercommunal conflicts

21. Intercommunal tensions between the Dinka Bor and Murle communities intensified in Jonglei and Boma States over incidents of cattle-raiding and child abduction. Fighting between Dinka Bor and Murle youth around Kochar and Manyabol occurred from 4 to 7 March, reportedly wounding 9 Murle and 11 Dinka youth. On 10 April, armed Luo Nuer killed up to 42 people, injured approximately 17 and abducted 25 children in an attack on a Murle cattle camp in Monychak village, Likuangole, Boma State, when they raided thousands of head of cattle. At least 1,000 people are reported to have fled the area for Likuangole. Meanwhile, authorities in Pochala North County claimed that armed men from South Sudan had killed 28 people and abducted 43 children from the Gambella region of Ethiopia on 12 and 13 March. Violent conflict between armed Mundari and Dinka Bor youth in Gemmeiza County, Terekeka State, between 2 and 13 May, led to the deaths of approximately 40 civilians, the destruction of villages and civilian displacement, and the temporary closure of the Juba-Bor road.

22. In Unity, the Governors of Northern Liech, Twic, Tonj and Gogrial States held a meeting in Mankien, Mayom County, to discuss issues affecting peaceful coexistence. The Governors called for a joint SPLA force from the four States to be deployed to specific locations and signed a 10-point resolution agreeing to establish a joint border court for cattle-raiding incidents and civilian disarmament.

IV. Humanitarian situation

23. Since the onset of the conflict in December 2013, more than 3.8 million South Sudanese have been forced to flee their homes, including 1.97 million internally displaced persons, and more than 1.89 million people who have fled as refugees to neighbouring countries, notably the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Kenya, the Sudan and Uganda. As at 15 May, Uganda had hosted more than 919,200 South Sudanese refugees, including more than 247,500 arrivals in 2017.

24. Owing to fighting and displacement in many parts of the country, humanitarian needs have risen sharply. In Jonglei, an estimated 100,000 people were displaced during the Government offensive in Ayod, Nyerol and Uror Counties, and several thousand were displaced by clashes in Pibor. In Eastern Equatoria, there was a significant spike in displacement as people fled from Agoro, Umeo and Panyikwara into Magwe town, as well as from Magwe and Pajok to Uganda. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal, clashes outside of Wau and reports of targeted killings during Government operations in Wau town displaced more than 22,000 people. In Upper Nile, an estimated 25,000 people fled renewed fighting and the government offensive on Kodok, Kodok County, Tonga, Panyikang County, and surrounding villages in late April. Many of those fleeing arrived in Aburoc, a remote location with limited access to water, while several thousand crossed the border into the Sudan.

25. The food insecurity and malnutrition situation remained dire, with localized famine declared in Leer and Mayendit Counties of Unity on 20 February, and some 5.5 million people estimated to be severely food insecure country-wide. General food distributions have reached more than 320,000 people in 15 locations in counties affected by famine or at high risk of famine (Koch and Panyinjar). In addition, food insecurity is forcing people to migrate to the Sudan from Northern Bahr el-Ghazal, and owing to conflict in Jonglei, particularly in Nyerol, people now face emergency levels of food insecurity. The economic crisis, particularly rising food prices, also continues to deepen food insecurity in urban areas. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and the World Food

Programme (WFP) are rolling out a joint strategy to stem the advance of famine through an integrated, area-based recovery and stabilization programme.

26. The collapse of the health system and spread of communicable diseases remained a major concern. As at 15 May, 8,160 cholera cases, including 248 deaths (case fatality rate: 3.10 per cent) had been reported across 19 counties in South Sudan since the initial case was recorded on 18 June 2016. Since the beginning of 2017, more than 439,200 cases of malaria and measles outbreaks in five counties have been reported, mostly impacting children under five years of age.

27. The operating environment for humanitarians deteriorated sharply. In March alone, seven aid workers were killed, including six murdered on 25 March in an ambush on the Juba-Pibor road and a health worker killed in an ambush in Yirol East on 14 March. In Wau, in April, three porters contracted by WFP were killed, and security forces detained one national WFP staff member, who was released in early May. Also in early April, there were physical attacks against humanitarians in Upper Nile, including the arrest and beating of an aid worker by Government soldiers in Malakal town, the beating of aid workers in Melut by National Security Service officials, and threats and physical assault against aid workers in Aburoc by SPLA in Opposition forces. Active hostilities forced the withdrawal of at least 100 humanitarians from Aburoc, Ayod, Kodok, Leer, Luom, Twic East, Wa'at and Walgak, disrupting services for tens of thousands of civilians in need. Large-scale looting of humanitarian facilities remained a major concern, including in Mayendit town and Wau Shilluk.

28. Notwithstanding the increasingly hostile operating environment, humanitarians scaled up their response, including through intensive access negotiations and sustained advocacy regarding the need for free, safe and unhindered humanitarian access. In 2017, more than 2.5 million people have been reached with humanitarian and protection assistance. This includes 2.5 million people who received food assistance, more than 1 million people who gained access to improved water sources, more than 76,100 children and pregnant and lactating women treated for acute malnutrition and nearly 52,400 children between 6 to 59 months vaccinated against measles.

29. Notwithstanding the declaration of localized famine in South Sudan, funding shortfalls remain a challenge, with the humanitarian response plan for 2017 just 46 per cent funded, leaving a gap of $884.7 million.

V. Implementation of the mandated tasks of the Mission

A. Protection of civilians

30. UNMISS continued to follow a three-tiered approach to the protection of civilians. Under the first tier, protection through dialogue and political engagement, my Special Representative exercised his good offices to engage national and local authorities and senior military officials. In those engagements, he stressed the Government's responsibility to protect civilians and the need for the parties to cease hostilities and ensure unhindered access for UNMISS and humanitarian actors. UNMISS facilitated conferences relating to pastoral migration in Terekeka, Jubek, Jonglei and Amadi States and delivered workshops on social cohesion, reconciliation and conflict management. UNMISS supported a high-level visit by First Vice-President Taban Deng Gai to Jonglei and Boma States that led to a cessation of hostilities and the withdrawal of armed youth to their respective areas. Separately, UNMISS supported an initiative led by the First Vice-President that resulted in a cessation of hostilities between Dinka Bor and Mundari actors in

Terekeka State and the reopening of the Juba-Bor road. A committee has been established to investigate the violence between the Dinka Bor and the Murle and the Dinka Bor and the Mundari and to make recommendations to prevent further conflict between those communities. In order to facilitate the peaceful migration of pastoralists and livestock from the Sudan to greater Upper Nile, UNMISS organized two migration review conferences for host communities and pastoralists in Renk and Melut Counties.

31. Under the second tier, protection of civilians under threat of physical violence, UNMISS continued to protect 230,482 internally displaced persons in six UNMISS protection of civilians sites, reaching the highest number of displaced persons within those sites since the December 2013 crisis. This included 119,139 in Bentiu, 38,833 in Juba, 30,559 in Malakal, 651 in Melut, 1,956 in Bor and 39,344 in Wau. A temporary protection area in Leer, southern Unity, continued to offer refuge to more than 1,000 internally displaced persons.

32. UNMISS continued to focus on pre-empting, deterring and mitigating violence against civilians in areas beyond UNMISS protection of civilians sites. Efforts included continued proactive deployment and patrolling, including dismounted integrated patrols comprising military, police and civilian personnel, to facilitate engagement with host communities and internally displaced persons. During the reporting period, a total of 7,927 patrols were conducted. In Juba, UNMISS extended its patrols beyond the weapons-free zone around the Mission's protection of civilians sites, including during hours of darkness, considerably reducing criminal activities in the zone. UNMISS also continued regular patrols outside the protection of civilians sites in Bentiu, Bor, Malakal and Wau. Planning for the establishment of weapons-free zones around the Bentiu and Malakal sites is ongoing. UNMISS undertook significant outreach activities, including integrated patrols, to conflict-affected areas of Kajo Kaji and Yei in Central Equatoria, Magwi in Eastern Equatoria, Raja in Western Bahr el-Ghazal, Wunkur in Unity, Manyabol Pochala in Jonglei, and Kodok and Aburoc in Upper Nile. Furthermore, to address incidents of conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence against displaced women and girls, UNMISS enhanced integrated and active patrolling in areas where women and girls were most vulnerable, including in Pathai, Yuai, Motot and Wa'at. In the protection of civilians sites in Bor and Bentiu, sensitization campaigns reminded women to adhere to the firewood patrols to avoid sexual assaults. In Juba, firewood patrols increased from two to three per week.

33. Under the third tier, establishment of a protective environment, UNMISS continued engaging with national and community authorities and civil society to identify measures that contribute to the peaceful coexistence among neighbouring communities. UNMISS, with the support of implementing partners, carried out 23 quick-impact projects, improving access to basic services such as water and renovating public facilities including schools, youth and women's centres and a safe house for vulnerable individuals.

34. Within the framework of the Global Open Day for Women and Peace, UNMISS facilitated dialogue processes between women leaders and the Mission leadership to evaluate the implementation status of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The Mission hosted 10 women's peace forums, engaging more than 500 women both from the UNMISS protection of civilians sites and local communities, to hear their perspectives on the impact of conflict on women and on women's representation in conflict resolution and dialogue initiatives. Recommendations emanating from the consultations and an action plan for implementation are to be presented to the UNMISS leadership in order to inform the Mission's good offices efforts. UNMISS also continued hosting human rights sensitization workshops, including on conflict-related sexual and gender-based violence, for community

members and national security forces. In addition, UNMISS hosted a forum on gender parity exploring critical linkages between the increase in the number of women peacekeepers and the effective realization of the Mission's protection of civilians mandate.

35. The United Nations Mine Action Service provided a weapons and ammunition storage container to UNMISS police at five locations (Juba, Bentiu, Bor, Malakal and Wau) to secure hazardous items confiscated during searches of the UNMISS protection of civilians sites. Additionally, in collaboration with UNMISS, the Mine Action Service conducted a risk assessment that included the review of ammunition and explosive stores across 17 UNMISS field sites.

B. Monitoring and investigating human rights

36. Civilians continued to bear the brunt of the ongoing conflict across the country. Although both Government and opposition forces were responsible for human rights violations and breaches, SPLA was responsible for the majority of cases documented by UNMISS. During the reporting period, UNMISS recorded the killing of 149 civilians and the wounding of 90 others in conflict-related violence. In Pajok, Eastern Equatoria, between 3 and 5 April, Government forces were responsible for indiscriminate and targeted killings of civilians, conflict-related sexual violence, looting and destruction of civilian property. This included at least 66 documented deaths of civilians of Acholi ethnicity, including eight women, five children and two men with disabilities, and the wounding of three others. Witnesses indicated the existence of mass graves in Pajok and Lawaci, and UNMISS found three newly dug graves and two sites with freshly turned soil. The Mission also received reports of three incidents of sexual violence involving six individuals; the perpetrators in one incident were reportedly arrested. Two primary schools and a health centre were looted and homes were burned. In Central Equatoria, a satellite imagery analysis carried out by the Operational Satellite Applications Programme estimated that, owing to recent fighting, more than 18,300 structures had been damaged in and around the cities of Yei, Morobo and Kaya. In Western Bahr el-Ghazal, on 10 April, after a suspected SPLM/A in Opposition ambush and killing of SPLA soldiers, SPLA elements, supported by Dinka men, sought revenge on civilian residents of Wau town. UNMISS documented 18 deaths and 10 injuries, including three women. All casualties were of Luo and Fertit ethnicity; three male WFP contractors were among those killed. Estimates by state authorities indicated 28 dead and 27 injured. The state governor established a committee to investigate the attacks, but to date, UNMISS has no information regarding any arrests made.

37. UNMISS documented fewer human rights abuses perpetrated by SPLM/A in Opposition, partly owing to the inability of the Mission to access Opposition strongholds. In Western Equatoria, between 14 and 19 March, five men reportedly affiliated with SPLM/A in Opposition kidnapped a local chief and three non-governmental organization staff, accusing them of being government spies. The victims were released after paying a ransom or following the intervention of a religious leader.

38. Human rights violations persisted in the administration of justice. UNMISS continued to document cases including prolonged and arbitrary detention, proxy detention, executive interference in the justice system, detention of minors alongside adults and detention conditions that failed to meet international human rights standards. Three men sentenced to death by Tonj County Court were executed in Tonj Prison in March, following a process that did not meet national or international due process and fair trial standards. In March, UNMISS documented the deaths of two inmates of Juba Central Prison who allegedly died as a result of

ill-treatment, inadequate food and lack of medical care, and of a human rights defender held at a National Security Service detention facility in Jebel whose body showed signs of strangulation. In March, prisons in Kuajok, Bor and Yambio reported severe food shortages.

39. Cases of politically motivated detention remained widespread. On 2 April, military intelligence officers arrested more than 50 Luo men in Wau on suspicion of supporting SPLM/A in Opposition. All individuals were subsequently released. The National Security Service continued to hold individuals incommunicado without access to lawyers or family and without bringing them before a court. Cases include SPLM/A in Opposition spokesman, James Gatdet Dak, who has been detained since his deportation on 3 November from Kenya, where he had refugee status, and three UNMISS national staff members who have been held since 2014, one of whom was released on 26 May.

40. There were further reports of attacks on freedom of the press in relation to the refusal by the Government to accredit some international journalists. In two cases, local authorities reportedly accused the journalists of publishing articles deemed critical of the Government. At least three other international journalists have reportedly been refused accreditation or visas in 2017. Separately, UNMISS documented an incident of hate speech at Aweil Catholic Church on 17 April, where two senior Dinka officials agitated against other ethnic groups.

41. During the reporting period, the country task force on monitoring and reporting grave violations against children documented 106 incidents affecting 7,557 children (3,965 boys, 3,592 girls). Over one third of the incidents related to the recruitment and use of children by armed forces and groups. Furthermore, 23 incidents of attacks on and military use of schools were recorded, mostly in Eastern Equatoria; one school was vacated, and the United Nations continues to verify reports of 55 schools allegedly used for military purposes.

42. On 14 March, the South Sudan Human Rights Commission reported to the Human Rights Council a massive increase in gross human rights violations and abuses in South Sudan since July 2016. Its mandate was extended for another year and it was charged with collecting and preserving evidence of, and clarifying responsibility for, alleged gross violations and abuses of human rights and related crimes, with a view to facilitating accountability and ending impunity.

C. Creating conditions conducive to the delivery of humanitarian assistance

43. UNMISS maintained approximately 1,021 kilometres of main supply roads, enabling humanitarian organizations to pre-position aid supplies for delivery during the rainy season. UNMISS provided force protection for food drops, convoys and other humanitarian activities in various locations. Patrols aimed at accessing areas where violence, displacement and human rights violations had been reported and where humanitarians were providing services continued to face frequent obstructions, delaying their ability to reach critical areas. However, the Mission forces have adopted a more robust posture, refusing to retreat and sleeping at checkpoints when necessary, in order to assert their freedom of movement.

44. During the deteriorating security situation in Wau in April, UNMISS stepped up force protection to WFP warehouses and staff. In Leer town, UNMISS accommodated humanitarians in its temporary operating base and regularly patrolled surrounding areas, enabling humanitarians to scale up their services. Furthermore, UNMISS helped to create secure conditions through mounted and

dismounted patrols for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and services in areas such as Nhialdiu, Kuach, Nimni and Kaljak. At the request of humanitarians in May, UNMISS supported the return of aid workers and the response to life-saving needs on the West Bank in Upper Nile. This included rapidly deploying troops to establish a light military presence to enable humanitarians to resume water deliveries to displaced people sheltering in Aburoc.

45. The United Nations Mine Action Service deployed 46 mine action teams to survey and clear roads, airstrips and helicopter landing sites to facilitate security and humanitarian access. A total area of 5,985,093 square metres was surveyed and released, and 12,435 explosive hazards and 219,889 pieces of small arms ammunition were removed and destroyed.

D. Supporting the implementation of the peace agreement

46. Overall progress in the implementation of the peace agreement during the reporting period was, at best, minimal. UNMISS continued to actively support the work of the Joint Monitoring and Evaluation Commission, including by facilitating, ahead of its plenary meetings, a regular forum for international partners and the "Friends of South Sudan" group to align the positions of the international community in support of the work of the Chair of the Commission. UNMISS also participated in the Commission working committees mandated to facilitate the Commission's tasks.

47. UNMISS supported the operations of the Ceasefire and Transitional Security Arrangements Monitoring Mechanism by providing force protection and logistical and administrative assistance to the Mechanism's monitoring and verification teams during their field visits, including to the sites of the alleged killings of civilians in Wau and Pajok. However, the Mechanism continued to raise concern about the Government's inflexible security clearance procedures and access constraints, particularly at checkpoints.

48. UNMISS police continued to work with the joint management team, comprised of officers from the South Sudan National Police Service and the SPLM/A in Opposition faction led by First Vice-President Taban Deng Gai, in support of the establishment of the Joint Integrated Police. With the support of UNMISS and UNDP, a total of 1,147 officers, including 195 women, completed their training on 26 May. UNMISS also supported the joint management team in developing the deployment plan, and UNDP and other partners offered logistical support, including the renovation of three police posts and the provision of police uniforms. All support has been provided in accordance with the human rights due diligence policy on United Nations support to non-United Nations security forces.

49. Progress towards the establishment of the Hybrid Court for South Sudan continues to be slow. The African Union Commission has not yet been given the opportunity to consult with Government officials in Juba on the Hybrid Court. However, cooperation between the Office of Legal Affairs of the Secretariat and the Office of Legal Counsel of the African Union Commission regarding the establishment of the Hybrid Court has intensified over the past three months. The technical committee for the consultative process on the establishment of the Commission for Truth, Reconciliation and Healing completed a mapping of conflict patterns and identified areas for national consultations to inform the drafting of legislation establishing the Commission. The plan and budget for national consultations was submitted to the Government for approval. The next step for the technical committee is to develop an action plan for analysis of the conflict patterns. The United Nations remains committed to providing technical assistance in setting

up the Hybrid Court and for the implementation of other accountability-related aspects of chapter V of the peace agreement, pursuant to Security Council resolutions 2241 (2015), 2252 (2015) and 2327 (2016).

VI. Mission staffing and status of deployment

50. As at 29 May, the strength of UNMISS civilian personnel stood at 2,604, including 845 international staff members, 1,371 national staff members and 388 United Nations Volunteers.

51. The UNMISS police strength stood at 1,692 of the authorized 2,101 officers, including 628 individual police officers, 989 personnel in formed police units and 75 corrections officers. The deployment of 160 Rwandan formed police unit personnel to Juba was completed on 4 April, and the arrival of 170 Ghanaian formed police personnel in Wau is expected for July/August. Deployment delays were attributed mainly to delays in force generation and readiness of force personnel and equipment, as well as security clearance requirements for troops and contingent-owned equipment imposed by the Government.

52. The UNMISS troop strength stood at 11,611 military personnel, including 189 military liaison officers, 356 military staff officers and 11,066 military contingent personnel. The 363-strong contingent of military engineers and medical staff from the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is anticipated to complete its deployment to Malakal and Bentiu by 10 June. Following the arrival in late February of a 255-strong advance party of the incoming Bangladeshi infantry battalion in Wau, the main body of the Bangladeshi battalion is expected to arrive in June, subject to securing remaining clearances. A 140-strong Ghanaian contingent is expected to be deployed to Aweil starting in July.

53. The regional protection force commenced its deployment to South Sudan in April, under the command of Brigadier General Jean Mupenzi from Rwanda. The 60-strong advance party of a construction engineering company from Bangladesh completed deployment in May, bringing essential equipment to begin the preparation of accommodation and working areas for the force in Juba. An advance party of the high-readiness company from Nepal started arriving in mid-May. The first elements of regional infantry battalions from Rwanda and Ethiopia are expected to arrive in June and August, respectively. The United Nations Mine Action Service conducted survey and clearance operations at the regional protection force site, resulting in the removal of 14 explosive items. As the full deployment, and planning for the effective employment, of the regional protection force steadily progresses, critical issues are yet to be resolved with the Government, including the modalities for implementing the mandate of the force to protect Juba International Airport.

54. UNMISS intensified efforts to raise awareness on the United Nations standards of conduct and to implement the Secretary-General's zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse, pursuant to his report on special measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse (A/69/779). UNMISS appointed a member of the mission leadership as a victim rights advocate and launched a "no excuses" pocket card that restates the rules on sexual exploitation and abuse and applicable reporting mechanisms, to be carried by all UNMISS personnel.

VII. Violations of the status-of-forces agreement, international humanitarian law and security of United Nations personnel

55. During the reporting period, UNMISS recorded 53 violations of the status-of-forces agreement, 38 of which were restrictions of movement affecting the Mission's operations and mandate, including in situations where outbreaks of violence were reported to the Mission. Of particular concern was the restriction of movement by SPLA soldiers of an UNMISS long-duration patrol from Torit to Pajok; threats by SPLA soldiers at a checkpoint to open fire on members of an UNMISS long-duration patrol from Bentiu to Wunkur if the patrol did not return to its base; small arms fire directed towards the UNMISS base in Leer and firing over the UNMISS base in Yei in May; and the physical assault of an UNMISS staff member by SPLA soldiers in Torit resulting in bodily injuries. Other violations recorded by UNMISS included five incidents of confiscation and/or destruction of United Nations property, seven unlawful demands for taxes and fees and eight cases of arrest and detention of members of UNMISS. The latter includes the detention of three staff members arrested in 2014, including an UNMISS radio journalist who was released on 26 May. The three staff members in prolonged detention have not been charged and the National Security Service has denied access to UNMISS to visit them since December 2015. The Government also continued imposing immigration procedures specific to UNMISS personnel and international contractors. Four incidents involving SPLA in Opposition were recorded relating to violations of the freedom of movement, unauthorized entry into UNMISS premises, firing at an UNMISS base and unauthorized use of UNMISS assets. The Mission continues to notify the host Government of the violations of the status-of-forces agreement through notes verbales and in meetings with relevant officials. A monthly matrix of incidents is also shared with the Government.

56. A series of security risk management measures aimed at enhancing the safety and security of United Nations personnel, adopted by the Security Management Team following the crisis of July 2016, have been implemented. The measures include revised residential zones for international staff residing outside United Nations premises, enhanced physical security measures for United Nations offices and residential compounds, improved systems to disseminate security and safety information and the development of a medical evacuation plan.

VIII. Financial aspects

57. The General Assembly, by its resolution 70/281 of 17 June 2016, appropriated the amount of $1,081,788,400 for the maintenance of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2016 to 30 June 2017.

58. As at 18 May 2017, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNMISS Special Account amounted to $281.1 million. Total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at the same date amounted to $1,613.5 million.

59. Reimbursement of troop and formed police costs has been made for the period up to 31 January 2017, while reimbursement of the costs of contingent-owned equipment has been made for the period up to 31 December 2016, in accordance with the quarterly payment schedule.

IX. Observations and recommendations

60. In paragraph 34 of its resolution 2327 (2016), the Security Council requested that I provide the Council with a review of progress made by the parties in ceasing hostilities, returning to the path of dialogue and achieving inclusiveness within the government and recommend any relevant adjustments to the UNMISS mandate. As made evident in the current report, progress in the areas mentioned in paragraph 34 has been extremely limited owing to the lack of political will. A whole population has been condemned by its leaders to appalling suffering.

61. With respect to hostilities that have taken place on the ground since the adoption of resolution 2327 (2016), both SPLA and SPLA in Opposition have been responsible for initiating military operations against one another, as reported in my regular reports to the Security Council, monthly briefings provided by my Special Representatives and other ad hoc communications to the Council. Significant hostilities have occurred in the Upper Nile region, with SPLA undertaking a major military offensive against the opposition in areas that have typically acted as a stronghold for the latter. Similarly, clashes between the parties have taken place in Jonglei, Greater Equatoria and Greater Bahr el-Ghazal, as well as in Unity, where humanitarian organizations are working to address famine and severe food insecurity. Rather than any abatement in hostilities between the parties, conflict has continued, with profound humanitarian consequences for civilians in the affected areas. The unilateral ceasefire announced by President Kiir on 22 May has not ended SPLA offensive operations. The renewed upsurge in fighting represents a callous and blatant disregard of that pledge.

62. Against the backdrop of heightened military activity on the ground, President Kiir officially launched the national dialogue on 22 May. Deliberations of the National Dialogue Steering Committee commenced on 29 May and the co-chairs of the initiative have stated their intention to consult opposition leaders within and outside the country, including Riek Machar. Joint statements by opposition groups, some of which have rejected the national dialogue in its current format, are an indication of their feeling that it is not a fully inclusive platform for discussion. With respect to inclusivity in the Transitional Government of National Unity, as mentioned above, efforts towards the consolidation of the SPLM in Opposition/Taban Deng Gai faction presence, as well as a few other political parties, have led to the exclusion of other key actors.

63. In the light of the limited progress in these key areas and the continuation of the political and security crisis that unfolded in July 2016, I cannot recommend any adjustments to the current mandate of UNMISS. The persistence of significant military operations on the ground, a complete lack of dialogue between the parties and the absence of authentic inclusivity within the governmental structures in South Sudan unfortunately mean that the mandate of the Mission, as currently structured under resolution 2327 (2016), remains relevant and suited to purpose, including the role of the regional protection force to increase security and protection of civilians in the capital. Should a genuine cessation of hostilities take hold, buttressed by the full implementation of the peace agreement, revisiting the UNMISS mandate and the tasks of the regional protection force would be warranted.

64. I again appeal to all South Sudanese stakeholders to silence the guns. A credible and inclusive political process, as envisaged in the peace agreement, is the only way forward. The parties must show political will to return to the path of dialogue. I acknowledge calls for a national dialogue; however, this process cannot be a substitute for implementation of the peace agreement. Furthermore, credible dialogue cannot take place in a climate of war, starvation or fear. I reiterate my call

upon the parties to implement an immediate cessation of hostilities and for the Transitional Government to restore the political freedoms necessary for a credible process.

65. Regrettably, with the intensification of the conflict, humanitarian needs have risen sharply. New clashes since the beginning of 2017 have uprooted additional tens of thousands of people across the country. Food insecurity and malnutrition in the country have reached unprecedented levels. Some 100,000 people are facing starvation and 1 million more are on the brink of famine.

66. I commend the courage of the humanitarian actors, who continue to reach millions of vulnerable people with life-saving assistance, notwithstanding an increasingly difficult operating environment, and often at real personal risk. South Sudan has become one of the most dangerous countries for aid workers, with at least 82 humanitarians having been killed since December 2013. I call upon all parties to stop attacks on humanitarians and humanitarian assets and to ensure free, safe and unhindered access to vulnerable populations.

67. I am alarmed that military operations and attacks by SPLA and other armed groups have all too often been indiscriminate. They have left behind torched homes and fields, looted hospitals and schools and abandoned villages and civilian casualties in their wake. Civilians continue to suffer human rights violations. Women, girls and children have borne the brunt of this crisis. The violations must stop, impunity must end, and concrete actions must be taken to hold perpetrators accountable. In this regard, the military trial being conducted for the SPLA soldiers alleged to have perpetrated the crimes committed against civilians in the Terrain compound in July 2016 must comply with international fair trial standards. Peace, accountability and respect for human rights cannot be viewed as separate stages in the trajectory of South Sudan: they are inextricably linked and must be pursued in tandem.

68. I commend the efforts made by UNMISS to improve the robustness of its response in the face of challenges that are unprecedented in United Nations peacekeeping. The Mission has further intensified its active patrolling in areas affected by or at risk of conflict and is making great strides to improve its capacity to project its presence in order to protect civilians from physical violence and to establish a protective environment. Intensified fighting and further civilian displacements have placed increased demands on the Mission.

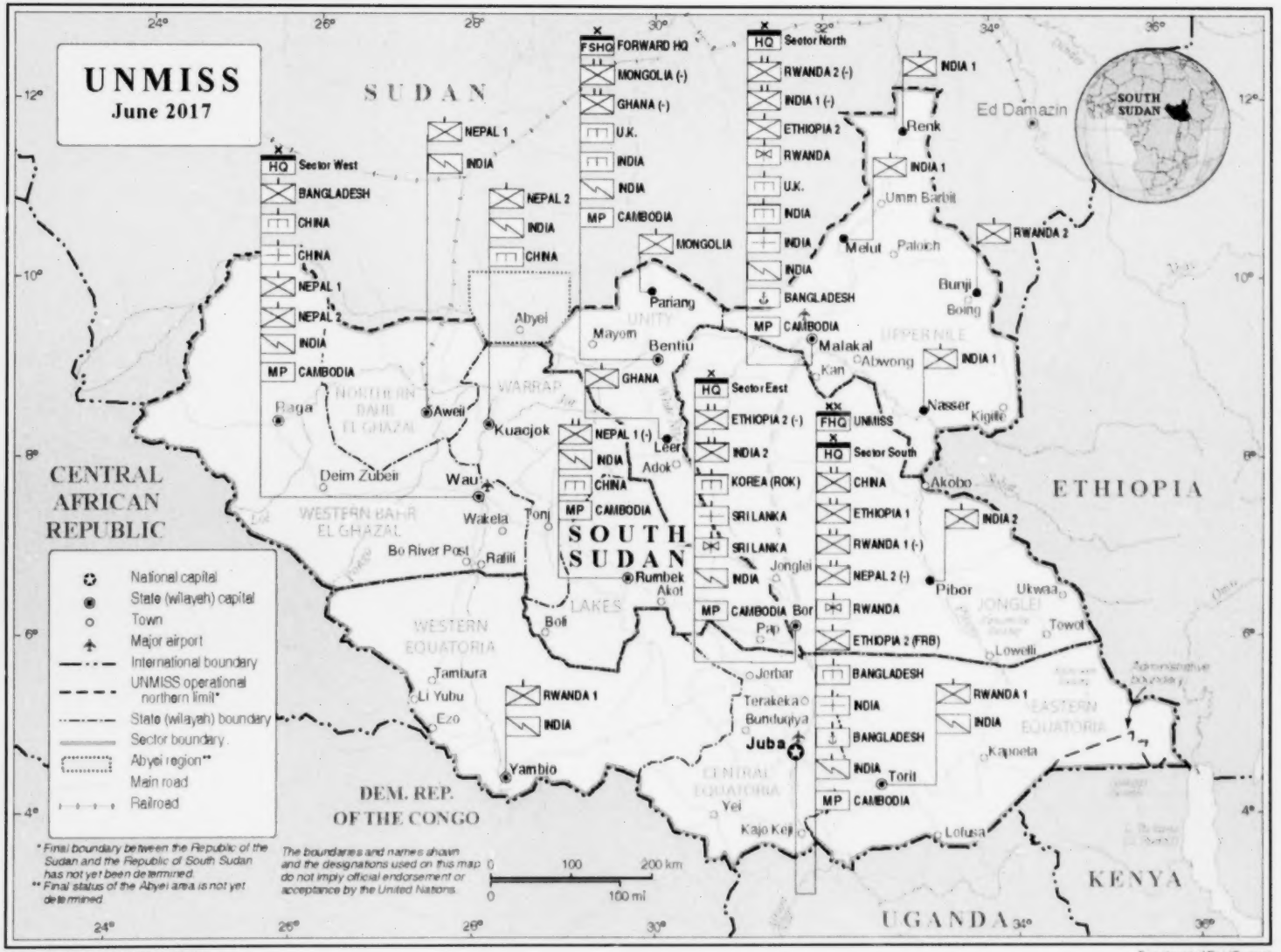
69. I welcome the deployment of the vanguard forces of the regional protection force, which, in the coming months, will boost UNMISS capacity in Juba, allowing UNMISS peacekeepers to further extend their presence across the country. In that regard, I renew earlier calls for troop-contributing countries to expeditiously deploy the remaining capabilities, which are critical to enable UNMISS to effectively deliver on its mandate. Similarly, I call upon the Government to facilitate clearance procedures for the rapid deployment of the full authorized strength of the regional protection force, in line with its commitments to the Security Council.

70. Now, more than ever, the Mission is needed to provide a protective presence for civilians and to support South Sudan in building durable peace. Looking ahead, within the framework of its current mandate and within its capacity, UNMISS should continue to prioritize the protection of civilians, both within the protection of civilians sites and beyond, including addressing the specific protection needs of women and children. The Mission should also continue to prioritize the promotion of human rights and the reporting of violations and abuses, while also strengthening mechanisms for accountability. Furthermore, I expect the Mission to continue to play a leading role in facilitating local and national reconciliation efforts and, under the good offices of my Special Representative, to support regional and international

initiatives to support the peace process. The unified and unwavering support of the Security Council for the efforts of the Mission in that regard and for the implementation of its other mandated tasks will be critical.

71. Since assuming my responsibilities as Secretary-General of the United Nations, I have engaged frequently and at length with key actors, including President Kiir and the guarantors of the peace agreement, to revitalize the political process and reverse the downward spiral that the people of South Sudan have been experiencing. I welcome the efforts of IGAD member States and the African Union to revive the political process. It is my hope that the thirty-first Extraordinary Summit of the IGAD Assembly of Heads of State and Government on South Sudan, on 12 June 2017, will further a coherent regional approach and result in a clear path forward for the political process. I reiterate the readiness of the United Nations to support the region as it leads the way in finding an inclusive and lasting solution to the conflict and its commitment to continue doing all it can to help the people of South Sudan to fulfil their long-standing aspirations to peace and security.

72. Lastly, I wish to convey my sincere appreciation for the steadfast commitment of UNMISS military, police and civilian personnel, who, under the able leadership of my Special Representative, David Shearer, continue to work courageously to protect hundreds of thousands of civilians, safeguard human rights, facilitate the work of humanitarians and promote an inclusive political process. I particularly thank the troop-and police-contributing countries that have provided much-needed uniformed personnel and assets to the Mission. I further commend the United Nations country team and non-governmental organization partners for their tremendous courage and sacrifice in providing vital humanitarian assistance to the population, under increasingly arduous and challenging conditions.



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